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PH. LEDERER, *Hebräisch-chaldäische Abbreviaturen gesammelt, alphabetisch geordnet, ins Deutsche übersetzt und erläutert*. Frankfort-on-the-Main : Kauffmann, 1894. Pp. 48. (Also with Hebrew title.)

THE author of the little book seems to be unaware of the existence of Buxtorf's *De abbreviaturis Hebræorum tractatus*, Basel, 1640, which is altogether more comprehensive. This work, however, is now rather scarce, and Mr. Lederer gives many abbreviations not to be found in Buxtorf, which makes his work really useful. To compile an exhaustive list of abbreviations occurring in the Rabbinical literature is almost impossible, as authors and copyists indulged in unbounded liberty. A pleasing feature is the brevity of the paragraphs, but it would have been preferable, if the author had abstained from adding to the names more than a mention of the country and of the dates of birth and death of the subject of the note. Otherwise Mr. L. is well read and shows discernment. Strange to say that he has overlooked some very common abbreviations, as ש"ע = שמונה עשרה and others. We may also call attention to an article of Zunz on *Begleitnamen in Chiffern* in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, vol. VI., pp. 187 sqq.

H. HIRSCHFELD.

DR. W. FEILCHENFELD, *Das Hohelied inhaltlich und sprachlicher läutert*. Breslau : Koebner, 1893. Pp. 81.

THE book under review is an endeavour to cope with the difficulties of the *Song of Songs* from a new point of view. The author, rejecting both the shepherd theory of Ewald-Hitzig on one side, and Delitzsch's country girl on the other, alleges that the Shulamith never in person entered the King's palace, nor knew him at all, but that the whole was an evil dream. This view, according to his opinion, is borne out by ch. vi. 11, 12, which the Shulamith utters on awakening: "There, without my knowing, my soul has made me the bearer of my people, a noble woman." She falls asleep again—which is accounted for in the last words of ch. vii. 10, and only in the following verses, down to the end of the book, we hear the Shulamith. Dr. Feilchenfeld believes the object of the *Song* to be, to place the spiritual love of which man is capable in contrast to the sensuous instincts which he has in common with the "hinds of the field." As a pure virgin, animated by this holy feeling, can never, not even temporarily, yield to any sensuous desire, the unholy, erotic life and its passions can only be undergone by the Shulamith in a dream.

This idea would have as good a title to throw light upon the principal obscurities of the book as any other, did it not create a new difficulty. A dream is the reflex—however confused—of matters experienced, or at least evolved in imagination. A pure virgin, as described by the author, must be quite incapable of having a dream of the kind mentioned above. But even if it may be allowed that the range of ideas and the language of a pure virgin was different in those olden times from those of the present, it is rather difficult to see how to translate the verses alluded to in the sense of the author, viz., מרכבות *Traegerin*, נדיב *einer Adligen*. Furthermore, the final words ch. viii. 10, are a figure of speech of a general character (ישנים plur.), rather than a reference to the sleep of the Shulammoth. Finally, it is questionable—as Delitzsch justly remarks—whether דוֹבֵב means *to cause to speak*.

Dr. Feilchenfeld sees the two kinds of passionate love opposed to each other in ch. ii. 7 (cf. iii. 5, viii. 4). His explanation of שְׁתַּחֲפֵץ by *Verlangen* in its more sensuous meaning, is not a bad idea, neither is it lexicographically impossible, and apparently supported by Gen. xxxiv. 19. But we must not overlook that in the majority of cases the root חֲפֵץ signi- fies quite generally *to wish, to desire*.

The author coincides with Ewald-Hitzig's shepherd theory, in being obliged to maintain the *rural friend*, to meet whom is the chief desire of the Shulammoth (i. 7, 8). The latter rejoices to hear his spring song (ii. 8-17), and she even dares to meet him at night without injuring her maidenly honour, whenever her heart longs for him. Blinded by the royal splendour, she is brought—in her dream—into the palace, but after having allowed the king to enjoy her charms, she is neglected by him (iv. 16, v. 1, *gone in his garden*). His subsequent repentance and renewed inchoate invitation are, however, removed by her waking up, and she is happy to find her rural friend near her.

This *rural friend* is altogether the *deus ex machina* of the drama, who invariably comes to the rescue whenever the situation becomes difficult, both for the Shulammoth and the student of the *Song*. The *friend* of iv. 16 is not assumed to be the same as in v. 9-16, but the latter is the young shepherd to whom “the spirit of the Shulammoth returns in her dream, after she has experienced the fickleness of her royal lover, and the constraint of court life.”

It is obvious that although much can be said in favour of the existence of this *rural friend*, there is quite as much to be said against it. With his help Dr. Feilchenfeld has—especially in the summing-up—skilfully built up his visionary drama, but its very artificialness naturally makes its structure somewhat frail. Dr. Feilchenfeld's theory, of course, also influences his clever translation, but we can only point out a few details. He makes עֲרִשְׁנוּ (i. 10) refer to the absent

friend, and translates it *unsere Hausranke*, i.e., the trellis covered with creepers outside her home, where the Shulammoth used to sit with her rural friend. But the signification of עָרַשׁ, so frequently paralleled by מִטָּה, or as explained by the context, is certainly *couch*, to lie or to sit upon. The Arabic *'arsh* is often used in the Qorān (lxxxv. 15, etc.) for *throne*. The signification of *trembling* for חָנָה (Is. xix. 17) is not so certain, and it is therefore rather questionable to explain חָנָה (Cant. ii. 14) on its basis. Is it not preferable to connect it with the Arabic *hhajan*, "refuge"? Ch. iii. 1 is without doubt rightly explained as a soliloquy, in which the Shulammoth expresses her longing (see also Delitzsch). The translation of שָׁנֵלְשׁוּ (iv. 1) by *heruntergejagt* is not a particularly happy one. We cannot so easily overlook the Arabic *jalasa*, "he sat up after lying on his side" (Lane). We have thus to imagine the herd of goats partly lying down, partly rising to their feet, and slowly descending while pasturing. שָׁלַחַךְ, *dein Entkleiden* (iv. 13) is somewhat doubtful (cf. Is. xvi. 8); *sprouts* agrees well with the context and is here perhaps a poetic epitheton for *arms*.

The obscurity which envelops the composition of *the Canticles* is certainly not lessened by the linguistic difficulties with which it teems. Happily Dr. Feilchenfeld is quite aware of the care necessary in dealing with the latter. His conception, on the whole, is original and often ingenious, although his explanations do not always carry conviction with them. Future students of the *Canticles* will have to consider his theory whether they agree or not.

A future critic of the *Song* will perhaps have to extend the long established nominal identity of the *Shulammoth* with the *Shunammith Abishag*. The latter evidently played a more important rôle at the court of Solomon than is discernible in the abrupt notices in the 1st Book of Kings (ii. 17-26). Did the poet, perhaps model his heroine on that beautiful maiden and her half erotic, half platonic relation to King David?

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